

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-06

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FM AMEMBASSY LIMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1453

AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMA 7539

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PE

SUBJECT: REPORTED DETENTION ORDER FOR NEW YORK TIMES
CORRESPONDENT

REF: LIMA 7522 (NOTAL)

1. MANY GOP OFFICIALS FOUND OBJECTIONABLE THE ARTICLE ON PERU BY BUENOS AIRES-BASED CORRESPONDENT JONATHAN KANDELL THAT APPEARED IN THE NEW YORK TIMES AUGUST 4 (REFTEL) THE AFTERNOON OF AUGUST 17 AN OFFICIAL OF THE SEGURIDAD DEL ESTADO OFFICE OF THE PERUVIAN INVESTIGATIONS POLICE (PIP) TELEPHONED A USIS LOCAL EMPLOYEE TO ASK KANDELL'S WHEREABOUTS. THE OFFICIAL INDICATED THAT THERE IS AN ORDER OUT TO PICK UP KANDELL FOR INTERROGATION WITH REGARD TO HIS STORY ABOUT PERU.

2. CHARGE MADE AN INFORMAL CALL ON PIP DIR GEN RIVERA SANTANDER MORNING OF AUGUST 18. CHARGE NOTED THAT PERU IS A SOVEREIGN COUNTRY WITH ITS OWN LAWS, REGULATIONS AND PROBLEMS. IT IS NOT THE FUNCTION OR INTENT OF THE EMBASSY TO INTERFERE IN ANY WAY IN PERUVIAN INTERNAL AFFAIRS. AT THE SAME TIME, HE THOUGHT RIVERA SANTANDER WOULD APPRECIATE THE PROBLEMS THAT COULD ARISE IF A U.S. REPORTER WERE DETAINED HERE AND QUESTIONED BY POLICE. RIVERA SANTANDER EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THE INFORMATION ABOUT THE SUPPOSED DETENTION ORDER, WHICH APPARENTLY
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WAS NEWS TO HIM. HE READILY SAW THE INADVISABILITY OF DETENTION/

INTERROGATION OF KANDALL. RIVERA SANTANDER SAID HE WOULD DETERMINE WHETHER THERE IS AN ORDER OUT FOR KANDELL AND LET THE EMBASSY KNOW. HE VOLUNTEERED TO DO WHAT HE COULD TO GET ANY SUCH ORDER QUASHED.

3. IN COURSE OF AN INITIAL COURTESY CALL AFTERNOON AUGUST 18 ON AMB. MANUEL ROCA ZELA, NEW FONOFF DIRECTOR OF POLITICAL AFFAIRS, CHARGE WENT OVER SAME GROUND AS WITH RIVERA SANTANDER. ROCA ZELA, WHO PREVIOUSLY SERVED IN WASHINGTON, ALSO EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THE INFORMATION. WHILE NOTING THAT PERUVIAN AND U.S. POLITICAL SYSTEMS AND ATTITUDES TOWARD THE PRESS DIFFER, HE FOUND IT HARD TO BELIEVE GOP WOULD CONTEMPLATE DETAINING KANDELL.

4. COMMENT: IT MAY BE THAT WE ARE SIMPLY DEALING WITH A CASE OF OVERZEALOUSNESS BY A SUBORDINATE POLICE OFFICIAL. IF SO, RIVERA SANTANDER SHOULD BE ABLE TO SET MATTERS STRAIGHT. WE WILL KEEP IN TOUCH WITH HIM AND REPORT FURTHER.

4. FOR BUENOS AIRES: TO BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE KANDELL IS IN B.A. IF YOU TALK WITH HIM, YOU MIGHT FOR NOW MERELY INDICATE THAT A PIP OFFICIAL ASKED US HIS WHEREABOUTS WITH A VIEW TO INTERROGATING HIM ABOUT HIS RECENT STORY ON PERU. SMITH

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